

“How To” GUIDE FOR CIVIL CASE OPENING



Eastern District of North Carolina
(revised May 19, 2006)

An attorney may now open a civil case electronically. To open a case, an attorney must provide the Clerk's office with a Civil Cover Sheet (JS-44c), summons and the complaint, which lists the case party information, along with the filing fee. Every party shall review and comply with Fed. R. Civ. P. 7.1 and Local Civil Rule 7.3. **New cases are deemed filed the day the Clerk's Office receives the complaint and any required filing fee.**

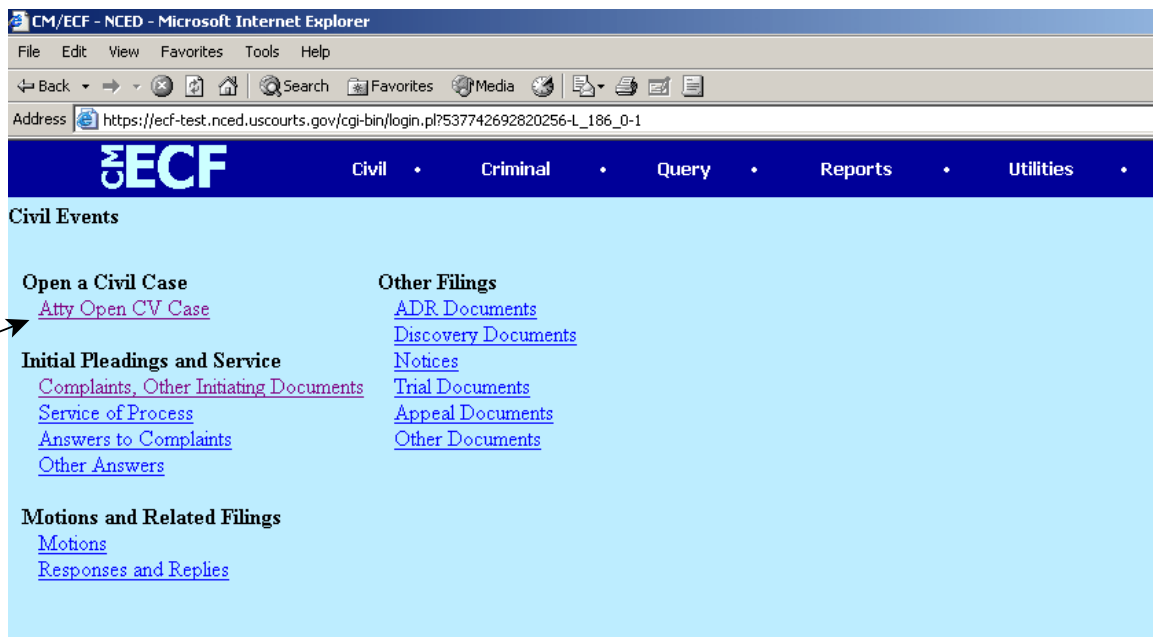
When opening a case electronically, the filing fee must be paid first. Effective April 9, 2006, the filing fee is \$350.00. When the attorney is ready to pay the filing fee the attorney must have the name of the case that is to be opened. Fees may be paid by:

- credit card (by phone or in person)
 - Raleigh Clerk's office – open 8:30 am to 4:30 pm
 - 919-645-1700
 - Greenville Clerk's office – open 8:30 am to 4:30 pm
 - 252-830-6009
 - Wilmington Clerk's office – open 8:30 am to 4:30 pm
 - 910-815-4663
- check (by mail or in person)
- cash (in person)

The filer will be given a receipt with a receipt number. The attorney will need this receipt number to complete the on-line process of opening a civil case.

OPENING A CIVIL CASE

1. Click on Civil.
2. Select "Atty Open CV Case"



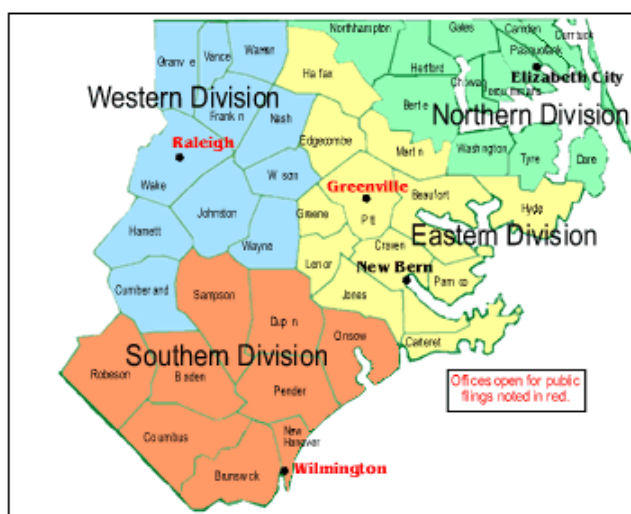
In the **Office** field: Assign the case to a division pursuant to Local Civil Rule 40.1(c)
Local Civil Rule 40.1(c)(1), EDNC

Civil Actions. The clerk shall assign all civil actions to a division when the action is filed or removed. If one or more plaintiffs are residents of this District, the clerk shall assign the case to the division in which the first named such plaintiff resides. If no plaintiff resides in the Districts and one or more defendants reside in the District, the clerk shall assign the action to the division in which the first named such defendant resides. In the event no party resides in the District but the claim is alleged to have arisen in the District or to involve real property in the District, the clerk shall assign the action to the division in which such claim is alleged to have arisen or in which the real property is situated. In all instances, a case shall be assigned to a division at the discretion of the clerk. In removed actions, the matter will be assigned to the division in which the state court is located from which the action is removed.

Full list of counties in the District on next

Examples:

Craven County	select Eastern Division
Wake County	select Western Division



Eastern Division Counties

Headquarters in
[Greenville](#)

Beaufort	Hyde
Carteret	Jones
Craven	Lenoir
Edgecombe	Martin
Greene	Pamlico
Halifax	Pitt

Northern Division Counties

Cases Managed in [Raleigh](#)

Bertie	Hertford
Camden	Northampton
Chowan	Pasquotank
Currituck	Perquimans
Dare	Tyrrell
Gates	Washington

Southern Division Counties

Headquarters in
[Wilmington](#)

Bladen	Onslow
Brunswick	Pender
Columbus	Robeson
Duplin	Sampson
New Hanover	

Western Division Counties

Headquarters in [Raleigh](#)

Cumberland	Nash
Franklin	Vance
Granville	Wake
Harnett	Warren
Johnston	Wayne
Wilson	

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Address https://ecf-test.nced.uscourts.gov/cgi-bin/login.pl?254616243251729-L_238_0-1

ECF Civil • Criminal • Query • Reports • Utilities

Open a Civil Case

Office Case type Case Number

Date filed 1/27/2006

Lead case number Association type

Other court name

Other court number

☐ Related cases

In the **Case type** field choose cv:

cv = civil

hc = habeas corpus

ct = prisoner civil rights

mc = miscellaneous (this selection is not activated and cannot be selected)

Leave the remaining fields blank.

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ECF Civil • Criminal • Query • Reports • Utilities

Open a Civil Case

Jurisdiction

Cause of action

Nature of suit

Origin

Citizenship plaintiff

Citizenship defendant

Jury demand Class action Demand (\$000)

Arbitration code County

Fee status Fee date Date transfer

→ This information is found on the completed civil cover sheet (JS-44c).

Jury demand: The removing defendant must change this field to ‘p’ if the plaintiff demanded a jury in the complaint.

Demand: This field is optional. Complete only if there is a monetary demand in the complaint.

10 = \$10,000.00

500 = \$500,000.00

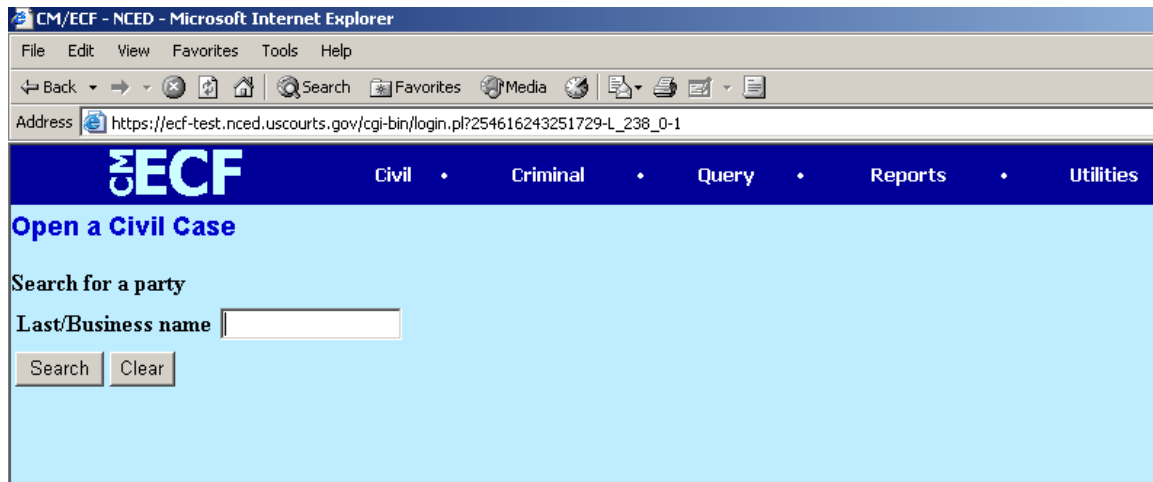
Arbitration code: Leave this field blank

County: This information is listed on the civil cover sheet. Use the county of residence of the first listed plaintiff, except in U.S. Plaintiff cases. In U.S. plaintiff cases, use the county of residence of the first listed defendant. In land condemnation cases, use the location of the tract of land involved.

Fee status: pd (paid) – when payment is made at time of filing
pend (IFP pending) – if case is initiated with a Motion to Proceed *In Forma Pauperis*
wv (waived) – used by federal government agencies

Date transfer: Leave this field blank.

Once you have filled in all the appropriate fields, click Next.



Enter the last name of the business or plaintiff.

Click **Search**.

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ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities

Search for a party

Last/Business name

Search Clear

Party search results

Mouse, Mickey

Select name from list Create new party

Click on **Create new party** if the party is not in the database.

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Address https://ecf-test.nced.uscourts.gov/cgi-bin/login.pl?254616243251729-L_238_0-1

ECF Civil Criminal Query Reports Utilities

Party Information

Last name First name

Middle name Generation

Title

Role Pro se

Prisoner Id Office

Unit Address 1

Address 2 Address 3

City State Zip

County Country

Phone Fax

E-mail

Party text

Start date

Alias... Corporate parent... Review... Add all aliases and corporate parents before clicking the Submit button.

Submit Cancel Clear

Last name: If the party is anyone other than an individual, (i.e., a company, a university, a municipality, etc.) the entire name of the party goes in the Last name field. This field will hold up to 200 characters.

Generation: Jr., Sr., III

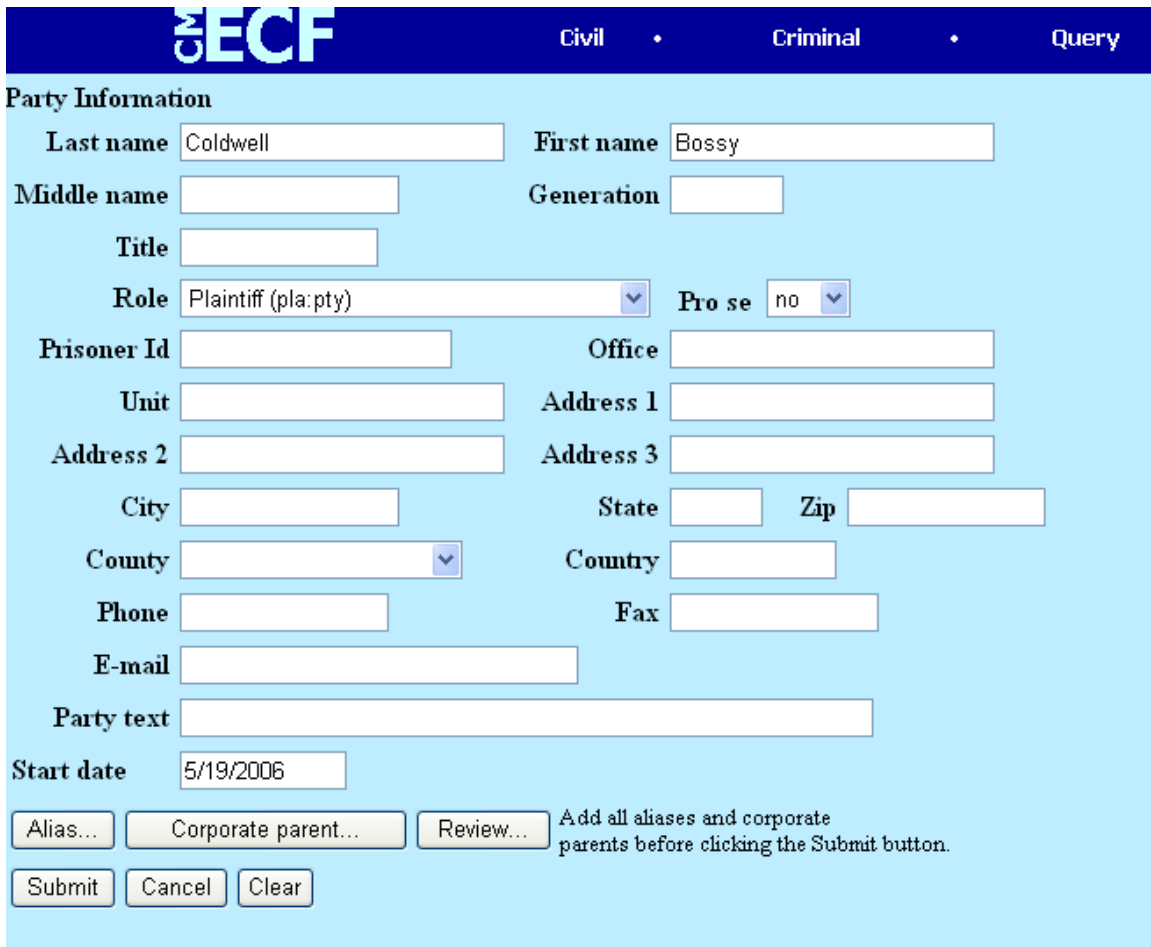
!!!!!!Role: the role will always default to defendant and must be changed to the appropriate role. **!!!!!!**

Pro se: This field should only be “yes” if the party being added is legitimately *pro se*. Do not put ‘yes’ if the attorney is just unknown.

Party text: This field is for descriptive information regarding the party (e.g., “in his official capacity”, “a Delaware corporation”, or “Commissioner of Social Security”). This field will hold up to 255 characters. Do not use this field for party aliases. Use the alias button at the bottom of the screen.

Alias button: Used when the party has aliases (i.e., “formerly known as”, “also known as”, “doing business as”, “on behalf of” etc.) The party may have more than one alias.

Corporate Disclosure and the Corporate parent button



ECF Civil • Criminal • Query

Party Information

Last name First name

Middle name Generation

Title

Role Pro se

Prisoner Id Office

Unit Address 1

Address 2 Address 3

City State Zip

County Country

Phone Fax

E-mail

Party text

Start date

Add all aliases and corporate parents before clicking the Submit button.

Corporate parent button: Parties must file separate corporate disclosures pursuant to Fed.R.Civ.P. 7.1 and Fed.R.Crim.P. 12.4 See Section A(10) and Form E of the *Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual*.

Click on the corporate parent button.

The screenshot shows the top of the ECF Civil interface. The header is dark blue with the ECF logo and the word "Civil". Below the header, the text "Search for a corporate parent" is displayed. There is a text input field labeled "Last/Business name" and two buttons, "Search" and "Clear", below it.

Enter the name of the corporate parent in the text box then click Search.
If the corporate parent name does not appear, click the Create new corporate parent button:

This screenshot shows the ECF Civil interface with search results. The header is dark blue with the ECF logo and tabs for "Civil" and "Criminal". The text "Search for a corporate parent" is at the top. Below it is a text input field labeled "Last/Business name" and "Search" and "Clear" buttons. The section "Corporate parent search results" is displayed, followed by the text "No person found." and a button labeled "Create new corporate parent".

There are text boxes in which to enter the name of the party's corporate parent.

The screenshot shows the ECF Civil interface for adding corporate parent information. The header is dark blue with the ECF logo and tabs for "Civil", "Criminal", "Query", and "Reports". The text "Corporate Parent Information (Party Coldwell, Bossy)" is at the top. Below it are text input fields for "Last/Business name" (containing "Dow Chemical"), "First name", "Middle name", and "Start date" (containing "5/19/2006"). There are "Add corporate parent" and "Clear" buttons. A note at the bottom says: "Click the Add alias button to return to the Party screen and submit all information for this party."

Click the Add corporate parent button.

This returns the system to the Party Information screen:

ECF Civil • Criminal • Query •

Party Information

Last name First name

Middle name Generation

Title

Role Pro se

Prisoner Id Office

Unit Address 1

Address 2 Address 3

City State Zip

County Country

Phone Fax

E-mail

Party text

Start date

Add all aliases and corporate parents before clicking the Submit button.

To check what you have added, click on the Review button.

ECF Civil • Criminal •

Review attorneys and aliases

Bossy Coldwell

[Uncheck to remove from list](#)

Attorneys added:

None added.

Aliases added:

☒ Dow Chemical, (cp)

In the Review screen, the corporate parent is listed with the designation: cp
Click the Return to Party screen and to go back to the Party Information screen.

The screenshot shows the 'Party Information' form in the ECF system. The form is set against a light blue background with a dark blue header. The header contains the ECF logo and navigation links for 'Civil', 'Criminal', and 'Query'. The form fields are organized into two columns. The left column includes fields for 'Last name' (filled with 'Coldwell'), 'Middle name', 'Title', 'Role' (a dropdown menu with 'Plaintiff (pla:pty)' selected), 'Prisoner Id', 'Unit', 'Address 2', 'City', 'County' (a dropdown menu), 'Phone', 'E-mail', and 'Party text'. The right column includes fields for 'First name' (filled with 'Bossy'), 'Generation', 'Office', 'Address 1', 'Address 3', 'State', 'Zip', 'Country', and 'Fax'. There are also dropdown menus for 'Pro se' (set to 'no') and 'Country'. At the bottom, there is a 'Start date' field filled with '5/19/2006'. Below the form fields are three buttons: 'Alias...', 'Corporate parent...', and 'Review...'. To the right of these buttons is a text instruction: 'Add all aliases and corporate parents before clicking the Submit button.' At the very bottom are three buttons: 'Submit', 'Cancel', and 'Clear'.

ECF Civil • Criminal • Query •

Party Information

Last name Coldwell First name Bossy

Middle name Generation

Title

Role Plaintiff (pla:pty) Pro se no

Prisoner Id Office

Unit Address 1

Address 2 Address 3

City State Zip

County Country

Phone Fax

E-mail

Party text

Start date 5/19/2006

Alias... Corporate parent... Review... Add all aliases and corporate parents before clicking the Submit button.

Submit Cancel Clear

Continue these steps until you have entered all corporate parents. Once you have completed entry of all corporate parents, click the submit button.

The screenshot shows the 'Open a Civil Case' search screen in the ECF system. It features a dark blue header with the ECF logo and navigation links for 'Civil' and 'Criminal'. Below the header, the title 'Open a Civil Case' is displayed in blue. The main section is titled 'Search for a party' and contains a 'Last/Business name' text input field. Below this field are two buttons: 'Search' and 'Clear'. At the bottom of the search section is a button labeled 'End party selection'.

ECF Civil • Criminal •

Open a Civil Case

Search for a party

Last/Business name

Search Clear

End party selection

You are ready to enter the second party in the lawsuit.

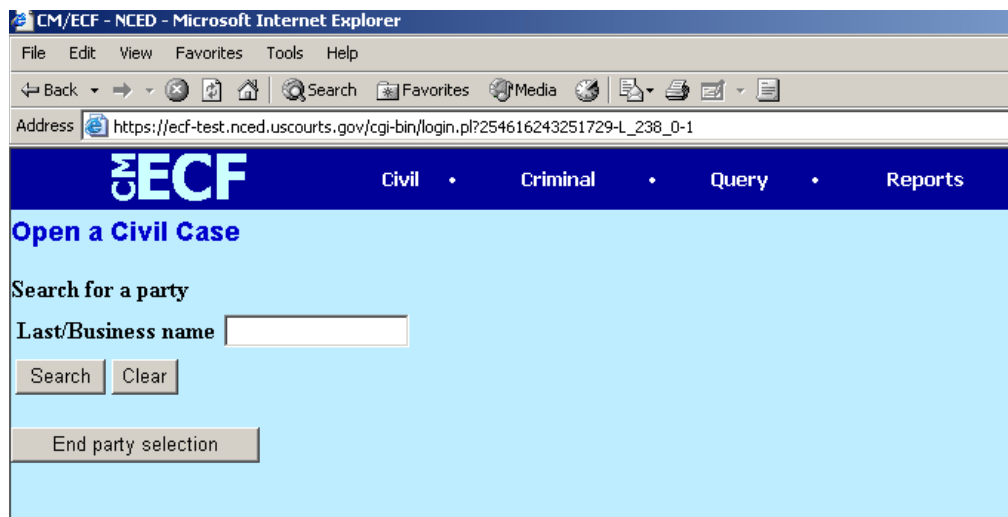
Review button: This button allows the filer to review all party information that has been entered, before it gets submitted.

Submit button: Click this button to submit the party information.

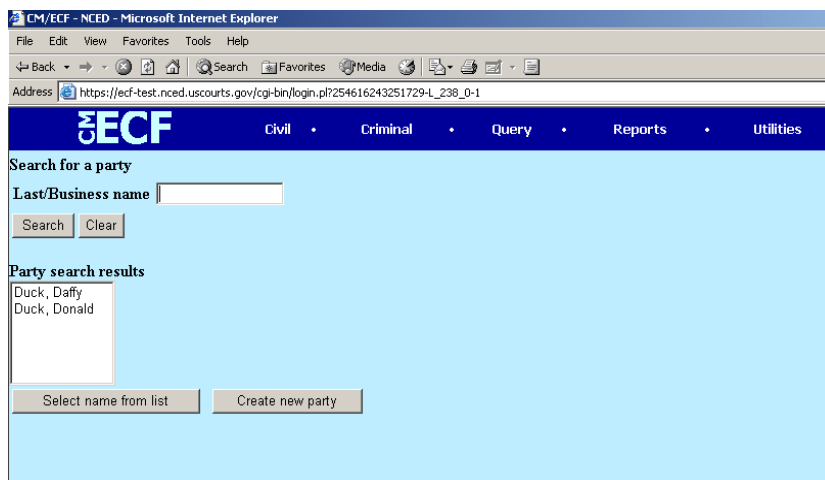
Cancel button: Click this button to cancel the information and return back one screen.

Clear button: Click this button to remove information added to the screen.

Repeat the process to add the opposing party:
Type in the last name of the party.
click the **Search** button.



If the party name is not in the database, select the **Create new party** button.



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ECF Civil • Criminal • Query • Reports • Utilities •

Party Information

Last name First name

Middle name Generation

Title

Role Pro se

Prisoner Id Office

Unit Address 1

Address 2 Address 3

City State Zip

County Country

Phone Fax

E-mail

Party text

Start date

Alias... Corporate parent... Review... Add all aliases and corporate parents before clicking the Submit button.

Submit Cancel Clear

Enter the party information.

CM/ECF - NCED - Microsoft Internet Explorer

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Address https://ecf-test.nced.uscourts.gov/cgi-bin/login.pl?254616243251729-L_238_0-1

ECF Civil • Criminal • Query • Reports • Utilities •

Open a Civil Case

Search for a party

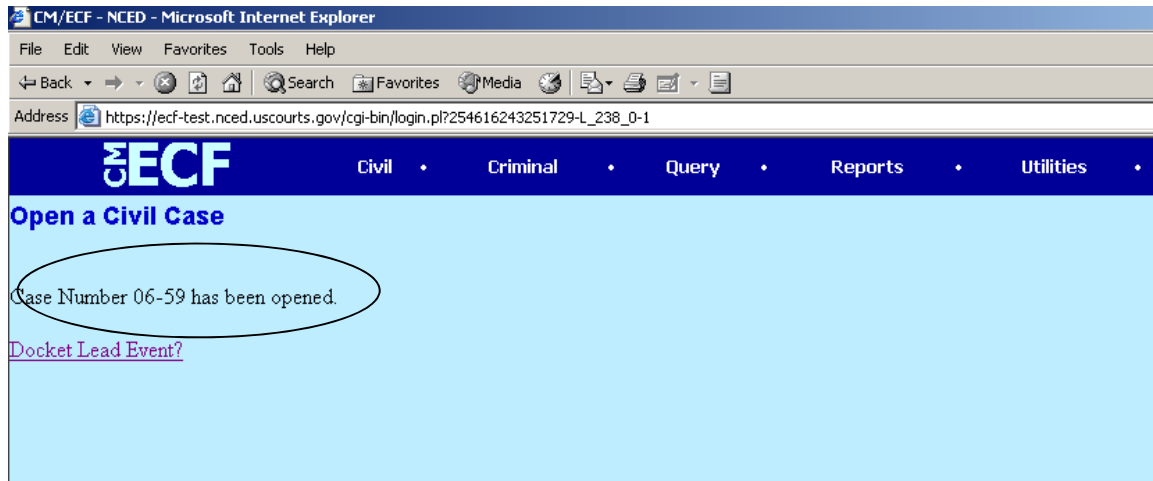
Last/Business name

Search Clear

End party selection

Once you have entered all the parties, then you click the **End party selection** button.

The system will issue a case number:



Any electronically-generated designation of a district judge or magistrate judge does not mean that the judge so designated is assigned to the case.
See proposed Local Civil Rule 40.2 and proposed Local Criminal Rule 5.2.

Docket Lead Event?: This is *any* case initiating document (e.g., complaint, notice of removal, motion to proceed *in forma pauperis*, etc.).

The lead event is where you, the attorney will be able to associate yourself with the party for whom you are filing. This association will trigger the electronic notification process in CM/ECF.

Once you click on the **Docket Lead Event** link, the system gives you a drop-down box of potential lead events.

Select the appropriate lead event.

Click **Next**.

When your case initiating event is a Motion to proceed *in forma pauperis* (event in drop down list is Proceed In Forma Pauperis), attach the proposed complaint and summonses as attachments to the event. Do not docket the complaint as a separate event until the court has granted the motion to proceed *in forma pauperis*. A summons cannot be docketed separately until it has been issued by the court.

The system remembers the last case you were working in and fills in that case number. Ensure that this is the correct case number and then click **Next**.

Select the filing party from the box on the screen.

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Address https://ecf-test.nced.uscourts.gov/cgi-bin/login.pl?254616243251729-L_238_0-1

ECF Civil • Criminal • Query • Reports • Utilities

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

[4:06-cv-00059 mouse v. duck](#)

Select the file.

Select the Party:

duck, Huey [Defendant]
mouse, minnie [Plaintiff]

[Add/Create New Party](#)

Next Clear

Click **Next**.

CM/ECF - NCED - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

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Address https://ecf-test.nced.uscourts.gov/cgi-bin/login.pl?254616243251729-L_238_0-1

ECF Civil • Criminal • Query • Reports • Utilities

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

[4:06-cv-00059 mouse v. duck](#)

The following attorney/party associations do not exist for this case.
Please check which associations should be created for this case:

☐ minnie mouse (pty:pla) represented by attorney1 (aty) ☐ Lead ☒ Notice

Next Clear

These boxes must be checked to activate the electronic notification process.

This box should be checked if you are lead counsel.

Associate with the party.

Click **Next**.

The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "CM/ECF - NCED - Microsoft Internet Explorer". The address bar shows the URL: https://ecf-test.nced.uscourts.gov/cgi-bin/login.pl?254616243251729-L_238_0-1. The page header includes the ECF logo and navigation links: Civil, Criminal, Query, Reports, Utilities, and Logout. The main heading is "Complaints and Other Initiating Documents" with a sub-link "4:06-cv-00059 mouse v. duck". The instruction reads: "Please select the party that this filing is **against**." Below this, there are two sections: "Select the Party:" and "Select a Group:". The "Select the Party:" section contains a text box with the following entries: "duck, Huey [Defendant]" and "mouse, minnie [Plaintiff]". To the right of the text box is a link "Add/Create New Party". The "Select a Group:" section has four radio button options: "No Group" (selected), "All Defendants", "All Plaintiffs", and "All Parties". At the bottom of the form are "Next" and "Clear" buttons.

Select the party from the box that the initiating document is being filed AGAINST.
Click **Next**.

The screenshot shows the same web browser window as the previous one. The main heading is "Complaints and Other Initiating Documents" with a sub-link "4:06-cv-00059 mouse v. duck". The instruction reads: "Select the **pdf** document (for example: C:\199cv501-21.pdf)." Below this, there is a "Filename" label followed by a text input field and a "Browse..." button. Underneath, there is a label "Attachments to Document:" followed by two radio button options: "No" (selected) and "Yes". At the bottom of the form are "Next" and "Clear" buttons.

Here is where you attach your initiating document in pdf format.

ECF Civil • Criminal •

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

[7:06-cv-00019 Stanton v. Delta](#)

Receipt#: Fee: \$350

Prior to opening a case, the filing fee must be paid and the filer must have a court-issued receipt number. That receipt number is entered in this field.

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Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

[4:06-cv-00059 mouse v. duck](#)

Docket Text: **Modify as Appropriate.**

COMPLAINT against Huey duck (Filing fee \$ 250 receipt number 123456.) , filed by minnie mouse. (attorneytl,)

You can add text to describe your initiating document in the text box.

ECF Civil • Criminal • Query • Reports • Utilities •

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

[4:06-cv-00059 mouse v. duck](#)

Docket Text: Final Text

COMPLAINT against Huey duck (Filing fee \$ 250 receipt number 123456.), filed by minnie mouse. (attorneyt1,)

Attention!! Pressing the NEXT button on this screen commits this transaction. You will have no further opportunity to modify this transaction if you continue.

This is the “point of no return” screen. Make sure the docket text is correct. If you discover an error here, click **Clear**. When you are satisfied that it is correct, Click **Next**.

ECF Civil • Criminal • Query • Reports • Utilities • Logout

Complaints and Other Initiating Documents

[4:06-cv-00059 mouse v. duck](#)

U.S. District Court

Eastern District of North Carolina

Notice of Electronic Filing

The following transaction was received from attorneyt1, entered on 1/27/2006 at 5:34 PM EST and filed on 1/27/2006

Case Name: mouse v. duck
Case Number: [4:06-cv-59](#)
Filer: minnie mouse
Document Number: [1](#)

Docket Text:
 COMPLAINT against Huey duck (Filing fee \$ 250 receipt number 123456.), filed by minnie mouse. (attorneyt1,)

The following document(s) are associated with this transaction:

Document description:Main Document
Original filename:n/a
Electronic document Stamp:
 [STAMP dcecfStamp_ID=1114528487 [Date=1/27/2006] [FileNumber=61641-0]
 [4d8f21942dbddcb1d57417e6126b3647a5c5afd371cd3b5e3436cf789833689d8779c
 b15baf934164721b4cba1e4093648b9e6df063e5b9ec38e8dbdd548c36]]

4:06-cv-59 Notice will be electronically mailed to:

This is the Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF) that you will receive when you complete the filing of your initiating document.

Congratulations, you have just opened your own civil case!